12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Mapuche

sects of local groups to form an ethnic bastion which continues to stem the thrusts of an antagonistic Chilean society. The Mapuche, in their own words, are "another race." They have their own gods, their own notions of right and wrong, their peculiar symbolism. If they abide by the rules of their society, they are well on their way to insuring their eternal place among the hawks of the sun.

II

The most dramatic aspects of social action involved in the central concept of Mapuche religious morality revolves around the belief that ancestors are sacred and influential spirits whose existence regulates and depends upon human moral conduct. Among the several visible forms assumed by ancestors are "hawks of the sun" (*antüpaiñamko*), a designation used by the Mapuche and employed here to symbolize all ancestral spirits. Hawks of the sun, then, are beneficent ancestor spirits who intervene in the affairs of the living, who are responsible to the living, and, at the same time, who govern human conduct. Mapuche die and become hawks of the sun. In this simple belief is expressed the notion of continuity between the living and the dead on which hinge concepts and practices of a ritual nature that order and sanction human relationships.

"Have you become hawks of the sun?" (*antüpaiñamko fietuín*). This is a rhetorical question addressed to ancestor spirits. It varies occasionally by the substitution of other birds or insects which are favorably regarded by the Mapuche: "Have you become butterflies?" "Have you become blueflies?" These are questions of the same order as the first, although sometimes used when more specificity is desired in categorizing members of the spirit world. All symbolize the transformation of the recently- and the long-departed ancestral spirits into certain visible creatures of Mapucheland.

Although the dead may assume a diversity of forms in making their presence known to the living, ancestral beatitude is reflected in the assumption of a good form—by noble birds of good omen, by the gorgeous butterfly, by the sonorous and glittering bluefly. In a like manner, evil and suffering are associated with and are symbolized by blackness and terrible,

12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Mapuche

Introduction

blood-sucking creatures of the night. Thus is the duality of good and evil expressed.

The problem of how the concept of evil originated among the Mapuche or how it might have changed during the course of the historical era appears insoluble, at least in the framework of a structural-functional analysis of morality; in any case, it is not germane to the thesis of this monograph. One thing is quite clear, however. Sin is laid at the feet of the living who fail to make proper propitiation of ancestral spirits and who break the canons of morality. Sin is the catalyst which activates the forces of evil. The eternal struggle between good and evil, involving all mankind (i. e. all Mapuche), engages the ethereal ancestors and their descendants and is reenacted daily in Mapucheland.

The struggle between good and evil forces is recounted and analyzed around the seemingly eternal hearthfire. It is dramatized during the periodic assemblages of the ritual congregation. It is the acknowledged be-all and end-all of the thought and activity of shamans (*machi*) and sorcerer-witches (*kalku*). It is signalized by the cry of nightbirds, by the wavering luminosity of *cuchivuellen*, and by a glimpse of the black-shrouded and saber-toothed *witranalwe*—contaminated, blood-thirsty spirits which roam the earth after dark in search of victims. The supernatural world encompasses that of the living. One is instructed to heed the line between good and evil, and one is shown where it lies. Transgression of this line is fostered by *kalku*, the embodiment of evil. The good life (health in morality) is guaranteed, at least on balance, by the good offices of the *machi* and the ritual priest (*filliatufe*).

The Mapuche world revolves on the moral axis between the living and the dead. The spirits of the dead either enjoy the halcyon shadow world where they exist in tranquility or, if improperly cared for and displeased, return to lurk among the living. The aloofness of the hawk suggests ancestral satisfaction. The nocturnal meanderings of various ugly nonhuman forms and distorted wraiths suggest ancestral discomfiture and dissatisfaction—a state exploited by evil *kalku* who inhabit the world of man. Propitiation of ancestral spirits wards off specific hazards and mitigates general supernatural danger. There are pitfalls, but there are also ways of avoiding them. The Mapuche

12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
SG4 Araucaniana SG4
Mapuche

world is fraught with supernatural peril. All serious illness, for example, is supernaturally induced. The good man is aware of the general threat and is able to circumvent its specific manifestations ritually. There is nothing haphazard about the eternal struggle between the forces of good and evil. Strategy is institutionalized and weapons are of the same caliber in both camps. This makes for an interminable struggle.

The dead visit the living. They are seen in dreams, in lifelike form, or as birds or other creatures of good or bad omen. They are also seen in waking moments, but only as distorted images of their former selves, or in nonhuman guise. They are ever-watchful, ready to do good if properly summoned but, if unpropitiated, they may return to earth and fall victim to sorcerers, becoming contaminated and evil. Ancestors must always be treated with utmost respect and care. Uncontaminated spirits of the dead are fundamentally good, once they have made a ritually perfect departure from Mapucheland; but they are capable of great evil if, because of some failure in the funeral rite, they are forced to linger around the grave or near the house. It is the most recently departed spirit which is particularly susceptible to the machinations of *kalku*. Its transition from the world of the living to the haven of the dead is the central concern of the funeral congregation, the major theme of the burial services, and the rationale for drunken communion.

The dead are a part of and yet apart from the world of the living. They comprise a special and sacred segment of Mapuche society. They must be approached reverentially, in an impeccable ritual manner, by the correct persons on the proper ritual occasions. Ritual appeal to ancestral spirits covers a range of activity, from that of the great agricultural fertility rite (*ñilutun*) to the simple personal offering of a handful of maize or wheat flour on a small fire outside the family dwelling. The approach varies with the situation and the specific motivation of the suppliants.

In analyzing the relationship between the living and the dead, it is always necessary to keep in mind that there are one's own direct ancestors, collateral ancestors, affinally related ancestors, nonrelatives, and the very important category of generalized Mapuche ancestors, the latter forming a lower echelon in the

12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
SC4 Araucanians SC4
Mapuche

In Araucanian, *kuk* means "hand," *wele* means "left," and *mam* means "right." *Welekuk* and *mamkuk*, or simply *wele* and *mam*, with *kuk* understood, signify respectively "left hand" and "right hand." There is an unmistakable and literal connection between left and evil and right and good. For example, *pülemam* (*pülem* heart) is an expression equivalent to *kume püle* (*kume* good) and means "pure in heart," "free from evil." *Wesa* (evil) and *wele* (left) are also used interchangeably. *Welenkün*, for example, refers to leftness and means a heart palpitation which foreboles evil or misfortune. Similarly, *welethurgun* (left talk) means to speak evil (especially of one's self in contemplation of suicide). An "evil-handed" or "crazy" person (possessed of evil forces) is alternately called *wesa kuke* or *wele kuke*. In a small number of other words there is also this literal connection between handedness and qualities of good and evil, but permissible improvisations actually would extend the number of such expressions indefinitely. For the most part, however, the association is analogical in a conceptual scheme in which phenomena associated with evil are linked to the left half of the universe and those associated with good linked with the right. The right hand column in Table I contains obviously good phenomena and the left their complementary opposites, as these entries are paired by the Mapuche. They constitute a partial expansion of the overall dualistic order of the Mapuche universe.

There are other clear-cut right-left associations from which analogies may be drawn. When, for example, ancestral spirits appear as hawks of the sun, in answer to a ritual summons or in a dream, they may make peculiarly significant gyrations to indicate the propitiousness of some act or plan or the effectiveness of ritual supplication. Whatever the motivation, if they circle to the right it is taken as a good omen, as an indication that events will go well, that prayers will be answered. If they circle to the left, prayers will not be answered, evil is foreshadowed. Some human error, some sin, is indicated—perhaps a sorcerer undiscovered at a funeral or fertility rite. If so, further propitiation is called for, the stigma of impurity or ritual imperfection lingering until a compensatory ritual is held. The Mapuche do not, however, erect insurmountable barriers to their

12: Faron E-4.5 (1952-1954) 1964
SC4 Araucanians SC4
Mapuche

777
787

own well being. Bad dreams or visions of evil usually occur before or during, rather than after, the singing of some ceremony, their obligation providing one of the motives for holding the ceremony, or prolonging and protecting it.

772
787

A similar association of right and left with good and evil occurs when anyone is startled by a bird's song near at hand. If the bird is to one's right, it signifies the presence of an ancestral spirit and presages good fortune. If on the left, it is taken to represent the embodiment of evil and presage ill. When one dreams of taking a left fork in the road instead of a right turn, this is also interpreted as an evil omen. Stories of moral import are geared to this left-right theme, insofar as persons who turn right enjoy riches, huge quantities of food served in banquet style, and general good fortune. Those who turn left suffer poverty, hunger, and general misfortune. Not until the steps are retraced (similar to the repetition of ritual prayer) and the right fork gained do persons throw off the ears of evil and come to enjoy the blessing of good fortune.

772
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782
796

During ritual the ritual priest (*ülkantufe*) cuts off the right ear of the sacrificial sheep and holds it aloft in his right hand, while offering prayers to ancestors and the pantheon. The blood of the sheep is placed in a special wooden bowl to the right of the main altar, and its heart is held aloft in the right hand of the *ülkantufe*, who passes it to his chief assistants lined up along his right, who also hold it up in their right hands. Similarly, the right ear of a sheep is severed in the *kanchelun* ritual, a sort of blood brotherhood in which the two participants swear lifelong friendship and mutual obligation on the sheep's blood.

[788]
[571]
[608]

772

There seems a clear enough association between good phenomena and the right hand, so that ancestral spirits, shamans, trees, rain, dry, and life itself may be placed on the right and, their complementary opposites, *weküfe*, sorcerers, *kai kai*, night, and the death in which forces of evil deal, on the left. There is always some association between rightness and leftness and, respectively, good and evil. By analogic extension, many other sets of symbolic values may also be ordered with reference to a right-left dichotomy.

While all the above-mentioned entries would seem to serve well as a clear-cut ordering of symbolic values associated with